

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 045298

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2

TAGS: EG, IS, PINR

SUBJECT: INTSUM

1. EGYPT. PRESIDENT SADAT IS CURRENTLY IN SAUDI ARABIA ON A SIX-DAY STATE VISIT. A LEBANESE NEWSPAPER REPORTS THAT SAUDI ARABIA WILL EXTEND ONE BILLION DOLLARS IN NEW AID TO EGYPT. THE PAPER QUOTES A RELIABLE SOURCE IN RIYADH AS SAYING THAT \$700 MILLION OF THIS AID WILL BE SPENT BY EGYPT FOR ARMS FROM THE WEST. EGYPT HAS BEEN RECEIVING EQUIPMENT FROM THE UK AND FRANCE UNDER PREVIOUS ARMS AGREEMENTS AND IS IN THE PROCESS OF NEGOTIATING ADDITIONAL PURCHASES FROM THESE SOURCES. (UNCLASSIFIED)

2. THE SUEZ CANAL AUTHORITY HAS INDICATED THAT A NEW SINGLE-DAY RECORD WAS SET FOR THE CANAL ON FEBRUARY 4. ON THAT DAY 54 SHIPS COMPLETED TWO-WAY TRANSITS, HIGHEST NUMBER SINCE IT WAS REOPENED ON JUNE 5, 1975. (CONFIDENTIAL)

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3. LEBANON. SYRIAN FOREIGN MINISTER KHADDAM HAS COMPLETED THE FIRST ROUND OF BARGAINING AMONG LEBANESE POLITICAL LEADERS TO FORM A NEW CABINET. CREATION OF A COALITION GOVERNMENT THAT WOULD INCLUDE BOTH CHRISTIAN AND LEFT-WING GROUPS IS A NECESSARY FIRST STEP TOWARD

IMPLEMENTING THE RECENT REFORM PROGRAM.

4. KHADDAM REPORTEDLY HOPES TO PERSUADE PHALANGE CHIEF PIERRE JUMAYYIL AND KAMAL JUMBLATT, PRINCIPAL LEFTIST SPOKESMAN, TO ACCEPT POSITIONS AS SENIOR MINISTERS. MUSLIMS AND CHRISTIANS WOULD HAVE EQUAL REPRESENTATION. JUMBLATT RECENTLY ANNOUNCED THAT HIS PARTY WOULD REFUSE TO JOIN A NEW GOVERNMENT UNLESS MAJOR ADJUSTMENTS FAVORING THE MUSLIMS WERE MADE IN THE REFORM PROGRAM.

5. KHADDAM TOLD REPORTERS THAT HE HOPED A NEW CABINET COULD BE ANNOUNCED BEFORE THE END OF THE MONTH. KHADDAM WILL PROBABLY SEEK PERMISSION FROM DAMASCUS TO PUT NEW PRESSURES ON JUMBLATT, BUT THE SYRIANS HAVE LESS LEVERAGE ON JUMAYYIL, WHO ALSO APPEARS RELUCTANT TO BE REPRESENTED IN THE CABINET. FEUDING BETWEEN THE TWO MEN WAS A MAJOR CAUSE OF HIGH TENSION LAST YEAR AND COULD HAVE A SIMILAR IMPACT ON THE PRESENT SITUATION. (CONFIDENTIAL) KISSINGER

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